

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

September 29, 2022

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva
Chair
House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Grijalva,

Throughout the 117th Congress, House Committee on Natural Resources (Committee) Republicans have engaged in robust oversight in attempts to have the Department of the Interior (DOI) answer for the implementation of detrimental policies. The Committee's oversight obligations, however, remain unsatisfied without hearing directly from DOI Secretary Haaland. Dishearteningly, Committee Democrats shirked this responsibility and have indefinitely postponed the September 29, 2022, hearing where Secretary Haaland planned to testify. The hearing would have provided the opportunity to seek much needed transparency into DOI's decision-making process.

In a letter to the previous administration, you noted that transparency is "fundamental to good governance and accountability."¹ In fact, you acknowledged that "the need for transparency is even more acute for our leaders."² Despite your stated views from the 116th Congress, under your chairmanship Secretary Haaland has not appeared before this Committee this year. As DOI continues to fail to fully respond to Congressional inquiries, Committee Democrats appear to shield Secretary Haaland from directly facing Committee Members' questions. After reporting resolutions of inquiry unfavorably seeking information from DOI, the postponement of Secretary Haaland's appearance before this Committee seems to signal another Democratic roadblock to prevent accountability for the Biden administration.

Secretary Haaland should appear before this Committee to answer for the decisions her agency makes, and we look forward to the prompt rescheduling of the postponed hearing. The American people deserve to hear directly from the Secretary as to why the Biden administration refuses to unleash our domestic energy resources, implements poor federal lands management strategies, and appeases environmental activist groups at the taxpayers' expense.

Sincerely,



Bruce Westerman
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources

¹ Letter from Rep. Raúl Grijalva, Chair, H. Comm. on Nat. Res. and Rep. T.J. Cox, Chair, Subcomm. on Oversight and Investigations, H. Comm. on Nat. Res. to the Hon. David Bernhardt, Acting Sec'y, Dep't of the Interior (Feb. 7, 2019) (on file with Comm.).

² *Id.*